

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 1903

## SHYLOCK HOMES: His Posthumous Memoirs

X.—Mr. Homes Makes a Sensational Exit.

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.

**EDITOR'S NOTE.**—It is with great regret that the editor of the Posthumous Memoirs of Shylock Homes is compelled to announce the final extinction of that genial and talented detective. The first inkling of the awful fact to reach my ears was from a hissogram over my radiator from Mr. James Boswell, editor of the Gheenna Gazette, asking me if I had received the manuscript of Mr. Homes' latest adventure. His own copy had gone astray, he said, and his inquiries addressed to Homes had been utterly ignored. "If you have received Chapter 10, kindly radiate it back to me, since I am holding the presses for it," hissed Mr. Boswell. It happened that I, too, was becoming anxious on this score, and even as Mr. Boswell's urgent messages had been ignored, so had mine also gone unanswered. Hence I radiated back: "Nothing doing at this end. Better look Homes up in person. Something must have happened to him, for he once told me he'd rather write than eat." Boswell's response to this was the startling tale of woe and villainy set forth below, which, of necessity, makes any further recollections of the eminent detective impossible, and hence brings to a close this more or less important contribution to English letters.

## SHYLOCK HOMES MISSING!

**LAST SEEN IN COMPANY OF TWO MYSTERIOUS OLD LADIES**—Undertakes to Find a Lost Dog—An Interview With His Office Boy—No Trace of the Eminent Detective Since Last Thursday Night—Foul Play Suspected—Death of Cerberus—The Autopsy Arouses an Awful Suspicion—Who Are the Guilty Ones?

(Copyrighted for All Hades by James Boswell.)  
Gheenna, April 1st, 1903.—Mr. Shylock Homes, the eminent detective, is strangely missing, and his friends, who have looked in vain for him in his accustomed haunts since last Thursday night, fear that he has met with foul play. It is known that through his successful work in unraveling a number of embarrassing mysteries of the ages he has aroused the jealousy and animosity of certain distinguished persons in Hades, but as yet no suspicion attaches sufficiently to any single individual to warrant arrests. Mr. Homes has lately received a number of threatening letters, all of them anonymous, and has repeatedly been warned by individuals apparently fearful of the results of his intrusion into their affairs to abandon his profession and go into some other line of business. These threats, however, he has treated with contempt and has fearlessly gone about his work undeterred by the fulminations of his enemies or the rebuffs of his friends. At the time of his disappearance he was about to announce to the world not only the authorship of The Junius Letters, and that of "Beautiful Snow," but had laid a convincing chain of evidence in his own mind leading to the exposure of the man who struck Billie Patterson, and the whereabouts of Moses when the Light went out. It is not believed by well informed persons, however, that the imminent solution of these mysteries has had anything to do with his untimely disappearance. In fact, a very definite suspicion attaches to two old ladies, in whose company he left his office on Thursday afternoon, apparently on the kindly mission of enabling them to find a lost dog. These persons, according to the statement of Joe, Mr. Homes' office boy, a somewhat dolt-witted but reliable fat boy, who was in the employ of Charles Dickens, called at the office of the detective on Thursday, shortly after luncheon. The names they gave were Mrs. Sarah Gamp and Miss Betsy Trotwood. Mr. Homes received them courteously and inquired their business.

My friend, Mrs. Harris, has lost her dog, Mr. Homes," began Mrs. Gamp, tearfully, "and knowin' as how there can't be nothin' lost with a gentleman

as knows as much as you does within reach, me and Miss Betsy says to her, Mrs. Harris, says we, what you needs most is a sloop, and in four hours your dear little Fido will be back a-barkin' in the sunlight o' your smile, and a-eatin' wittles with all his at present missin' grave."

Miss Trotwood nodded her acquiescence in this statement.

"But," continued Mrs. Gamp, "Mrs. Harris she's so nervously flabbergasted by Fido's continued absence from home considerin' the temptations of life in a great city, that she ain't got the strength to come herself, so she says to me, says she, 'Sairy, you see the sloop for me and tell him there ain't nothin' I don't do for him and his'n if he'll restore my darlin' Fido to my arms.' And so, Mr. Homes, that is why I have come properly chaperoned, as you will kindly observe, by my friend Miss Betsy Trotwood, a lady of irreproachable characteristics and rectitude."

Mr. Homes laughed.

"The finding of lost dogs, madame," said he, "is somewhat out of my line."

"How about the Hound of the Basketwheels?" demanded Mrs. Gamp. "If that don't show you to be the very prime minister of dog catchers, Mr. Homes, then I am very much mistaken, and them's the very words I used to Mrs. Harris when she says, as she did say, says she, 'He won't waste no time over no dog, Sairy.' Mrs. Harris, says I, 'he's a human being, that Mr. Shylock Homes is,' says I, 'and there ain't no case of downtrodden humanity that he won't take up, even if it's only a dog.'"

"Them's the precise words," said Miss Trotwood, as reported by Joe, the fat boy of Mr. Homes' office.

The great detective was obviously flattered. He had refused dozens of such cases in the past, as the records of his office show beyond all question, but the sublime confidence in his powers of these two old ladies, representing a third, apparently appealed very strongly to his heart.

"I judge, Mrs. Gamp," said he, "from your silent emphasis of the 'g' in your participles, that you are the estimable lady of whom my friend, Martin Chuzzlewit, has told me so much?"

"Ain't he a wonder?" cried Mrs. Gamp. "He's detected me right off!"

"I will take the case of Fido," said Mr. Homes, complacently, "and if he has not been ground up into sausages by this time I will restore him to Mrs. Harris."

"And if he has been ground up into sausages?" sobbed Miss Betsy Trotwood.

Homes smiled.

"Well, Miss Trotwood," said he, "while all sausages look alike to me, I promise you that I will send those into which Fido has evolved to you to be handed over to the lady so awfully bereft in time to use at her next Sunday's breakfast. Did Fido have any distinguishing features to differentiate him from other dogs?"

Miss Trotwood darted an anxious glance at Mrs. Gamp, who trembled slightly, but immediately replied:

"Yes, Mr. Homes—three heads and an appetite for each one of 'em!"

"Ah!—please repeat the description," said Mr. Homes, perplexed.

"Three heads—one bull, one skye, one dachshund—and the appetite of a man-eatin' lion for each pair of jaws."

"He should be easy to find," said Mr. Homes, jotting down a memorandum of the description on his cuff, a habit of his of long standing, "and I cheerfully accept the commission."

Here he reached for his hat.

"We'll start out at once, ladies," he added. And with that the three passed out of the office.

Since that time Mr. Homes has not been seen by mortal eyes.

Immediately upon receiving the information contained in the above statement from Joe, the office boy, the reporter of the Gazette called upon Mrs. Sarah Gamp, at her residence on Thirty-seventh street, Climmeria, and later upon Miss Betsy Trotwood at her little cottage at Inferno by the Sea.

"I never heard of no Mr. Shylock Homes," said Mrs. Gamp. "What's his trade?"

"An eminent detective, who is missing, and was last seen in your company," said the reporter.

Mrs. Gamp rose in her might.

"In my company?" she roared, indignantly. "Who said that? I never went with no gentleman of no such name, nor no other gentleman, neither, as I wasn't acquainted with. Me? In his company? When?"

"Last Thursday afternoon," said the reporter.

Mrs. Gamp laughed. "I can prove an alimony for Thursday," she said. "Come out here into the laundry," she added, leading the way and beckoning me to follow.

The reporter went out as he was bade, and before him, ranged in snowy white rows, were some dozen or more immaculately laundered shirts, a score or more of collars, and a few other articles of personal apparel not necessary to mention. It was evident that Mrs. Gamp was at least an industrious person.

"That's what I was a-doin' of Thursday afternoon," said she, triumphantly.

"Then you know nothing of Mrs. Harris' dog?" asked the reporter.

"Mrs. Harris never had no dog," said Mrs. Gamp, "for the very good reason that there wasn't no Mrs. Harris to have no dog."

Miss Trotwood was a different proposition, but what she said pointed to the same conclusion.

"I never knew any Mrs. Harris, any Mrs. Gamp, or any three-headed dog, nor any Mr. Shylock Homes. I've never been to town, I just live here, and raise rhubarb and pumpkins, and morning glories."

"Where were you last Thursday afternoon?" persisted the reporter.

"Home—in bed with a headache—trying to read the 'Confessions of Mary Mac Basketchief,'" she replied.

"And you never saw Mr. Shylock Homes?" asked the reporter.

"Who's he?" demanded Miss Betsy Trotwood. "Never heard of him. What's he do?"

The sincerity of both ladies was evident. No one could doubt, after seeing them, that they were not and could not have been mixed up in this affair. Still the reporter ventured:

"You know the case of Mrs. Harris' dog?"

"Never heard of Mrs. Harris, or her dog, either, as I have already told you," she retorted. "Is there a Mrs. Harris, and has she a dog?"

There was no need to pursue the question further, and the reporter left. It was evident that Mr. Homes' callers were spurious.

Yet the question remained unanswered—what had become of the great detective? More than ever was his disappearance regretted, for here was a problem which his own genius would be taxed to solve. Where was he, and who were the old ladies who had impersonated Mrs. Gamp and the estimable Miss Trotwood?

The mystery is still unsolved, but it is interesting in this connection to note the extras of Friday night newspapers.

"Cerberus died suddenly this morning," said they. "An autopsy will be held this afternoon to ascertain the cause."

The famous canine guardian of the entrance to Hades, after centuries of service, had indubitably passed away, and apparently from an acute attack of indigestion. The latter impression, however, was corrected later, for the autopsy, which was conducted the following morning by a number of the most astute

doctors of the Stygian country, revealed embedded in the huge creature's vermiform appendix no less an object than a pair of solid gold link sieve buttons, upon which was engraved a monogram containing the two letters "S" and "H." One stands aghast with horror at the suggestion which inevitably follows such a discovery. Mr. Homes disappears in company with two old ladies subsequently shown to be imposters, in search of the alleged lost dog of a mythical person, description of which animal is precisely the description of the ravenous beast who, within twelve hours, is found dead with the cuff buttons of the missing man secreted in his vermiform appendix. The logic of the situation points unswervingly to the theory that Mr. Homes fell unwittingly into the hands of his enemies—enemies who purposely laid a trap by which he should meet a horrible end—that of being devoured by a beast of more than ordinary ferocity. The conclusion seems to be that he followed such clues as the fictitious Mrs. Gamp and Miss Trotwood had given him, and with unerring accuracy developed the identity of the imposters, and the presence of Cerberus himself, by whom he was instantly slain and devoured. That he carried with him the instruments of vengeance upon the dog himself was retribution of a proper sort, and a swift enough revenge to please Homes' friends. In so far as it visited punishment upon his immediate slayer, but what of the two old ladies? Who are they, and how can they be punished for their undoubted complicity in the crime?

That is the question which is now agitating all Hades, and it gives the Gazette great pleasure to announce that the firm of Hawkshaw & Le Coq have taken it in hand. These gentlemen have offered to serve without pay, which is very generous, considering the rivalry to which they were subjected by Mr. Homes during his lifetime.

Meanwhile we must await the issue with patience. Postscript.—Messrs. Hawkshaw and Le Coq have

discovered, upon the left bank of the River Styx, the discarded disguises of Mrs. Gamp and Miss Trotwood, but have decided to withdraw from any further pursuit of the problem, since there are no marks upon the disguises by which their wearers may be identified.

Hence, it is probable that the mystery as to the identity of Shylock Homes' murderers will never be disclosed, and that the joint monument to himself and Cerberus, to be erected over the grave of the latter, will be all that in the ages to come will exist to keep alive the memory of the greatest detective of all time.

## EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT.

Shocked and horrified by this awful story of Homes' fate, I have repeatedly tried, during the last twenty-four hours, to radiate a steam-heated message back to Hades and to Boswell, but in some mysterious fashion the connection has been cut off. I have a dreadful suspicion that I know who the impersonators of the two old ladies were, and I have even contemplated suicide in order to reach Climmeria in time to institute an inquiry as to the whereabouts of Monsieur Le Coq and Samuel Hawkshaw on that ill-fated Thursday afternoon. There is strong evidence in Homes' stories already published in this series of his conflicts with these men to establish a motive, and the finding of the Gamp and Trotwoodian garments on the banks of the Styx by these worthless, coupled with their instant abandonment of the case, strikes me as a highly suspicious circumstance.

But how to get my suspicions to Hades? That is the question which is now agitating my mind, and I shall be grateful to any reader of these papers or friend of theirs who can help me to solve the problem.

J. K. B.

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## Lincoln and the Whetstone.

Concerning the great height of Abraham Lincoln the following story is told, which is said to be new, says the Detroit Tribune. When a candidate for the Illinois legislature and while making a personal canvass of his district, he one day took dinner with a farmer who also loaned him a whetstone with which to sharpen his knife. Years afterward, when Mr. Lincoln had become president, a soldier came to call on him at the White House. At the first glance the chief executive said:

"Yes, I remember you; you used to live on the Danville road. I took dinner with you when I was running for the legislature. I recollect that we stood talking out at the barnyard gate, while I sharpened my jackknife."

"Y-a-a-s," drawled the soldier; "you did. But, say, wherever did you put that whetstone? I looked for it a dozen times, but I never could find it after the day you used it. We 'lowed as how maybe you took it 'long with you."

"No," said Lincoln, looking serious and pushing away a lot of documents of state from the desk in front of him. "No, I put it on top of the gate post—that high one."

"Well," exclaimed the visitor, "maybe you did. Couldn't nobody else have put it there, and none of us ever thought to look there for it."

The soldier was then on his way home, and when he got there the first thing he did was to look for the whetstone. And, sure enough, there it was, just where Lincoln had laid it fifteen years before. The honest fellow wrote a letter to the chief magistrate of the nation, telling him that the whetstone had been found and would never be lost again.

## He Wanted to See the Stage.

(New York Tribune.)

He was a genuine Kube, and had never been to the opera. He chose Saturday night to reform, bought an admission as soon as the doors were open, and passed into the lobby. He wore a rusty hat tilted over one eye, a stubby chin beard, a much starched collar, a long brown overcoat and a chewing gum. Max Hirsch, "the silver haired treasurer," as Ted Marks calls him, noted the stranger curiously, and then turned to other things.

The opera had been going on some twenty minutes and Mr. Hirsch was standing near the door, when down the stairs came the Kube, still chewing gum. He came up to the treasurer.

"Say," he remarked, "be you the manager?"

"I wish I were," said Mr. Hirsch, thereby making himself one of the best of candidates, "but I can speak for the manager. What is it?"

"Wall, I reckon I paid good money ter git into this yere place, an', by gosh, I want ter see the stage. Don't I git a sight of the stage?"

"Certainly you do," said Mr. Hirsch.

"Wall, I bin wanderin' around these got darn horse-necked halls, acclimbin' up and down stairs, well nigh onto an hour, but I ain't seen no stage yet."

Mr. Hirsch called an usher. "Show this gentleman how to get into the house," said he.

The usher led the visitor through a door. "Wall, ain't it simple, though," the latter exclaimed. "He looked about the auditorium in open-mouthed amazement. 'By golly,' he said, 'ain't this place a whopper.'"

Then he caught sight of the stage and settled happily down to his gum-chewing.

## STYLE, FIT, WEAR IN CLOTHES

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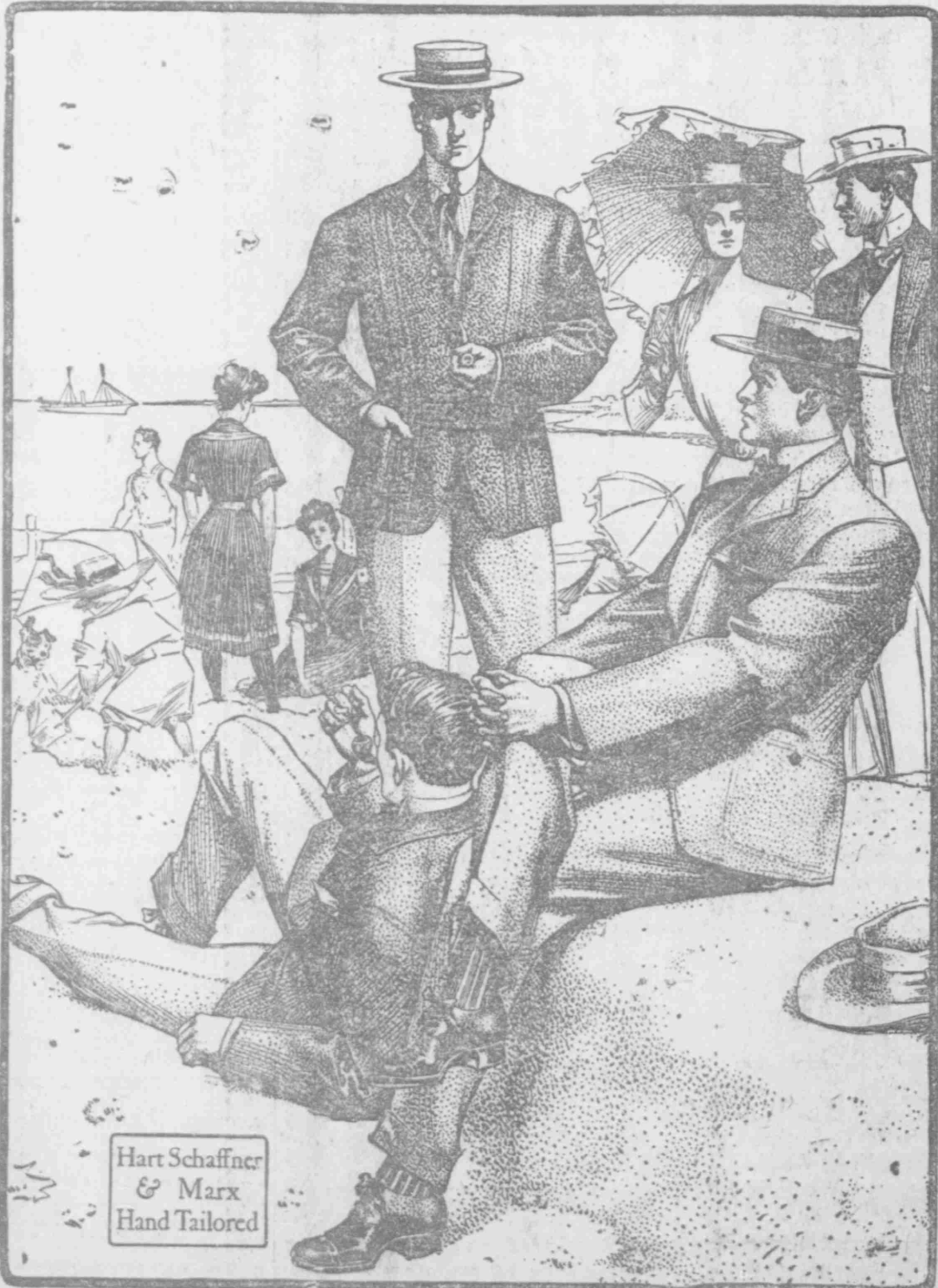
Suits, new spring fabrics, hand-tailored, **\$10 to \$30.**  
Overcoats, three-fourth length, top coats rather short, rain coats extra long, **\$10 to \$25.** Extra trousers, **\$2 to \$9.**

## THE EASTER HAT.

Easter Sunday calls for the "Youmans" Silk Hat, H. S. & M. Frock Coat, and R. & A. Gloves and Cane. The R. & A. Derby \$3.00 distinctive style, superior quality. Impossible to enumerate soft hat styles; sufficient to say we have them. R. & A. make, \$3.00; "Youmans" and "Stetsons," \$5.00.

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Easter Neck Scarfs, beautiful French silks, exclusive designs, found no where else, 50c to \$3. Shirts that fit, and made from fabrics we control the sale of here. Gloves, Walking Sticks. All that goes to make a man well dressed is here.



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